A PRIESTHOOD ISSUE – Joseph W. Musser

1. Let thy bowels also be full of charity towards all men, and to the household of faith, and let virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly: Then shall thy confidence wax strong in the presence of God; AND THE DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD shall distill upon thy soul as the dews from heaven. - D. & C., 121:45.

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INTRODUCTION

As Priesthood is one of the cornerstones of the theology of the Latter-day Saints, it is incumbent on all Church members to give close and careful study to the subject.

To those who are not members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints but who are capable of thought, reason and decision, this subject of Priesthood should have a special appeal.

Appreciating as we do the revolutionary aspects of our treatment of the subject - holding that the Church is but auxiliary to the Priesthood, and that Priesthood as an actual living organization is above that of the Church, in fact the latter's leader, we approach the task in deep humility but in boldness, with no other desire than a mutual understanding.

Since the Brochure takes the place of PRIESTHOOD ITEMS, published by TRUTH PUBLISHING COMPANY in the year 1934, and long since out of print, and a large demand being made for the same, its re-publishing at this time is justified.

AUTHORS

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A PRIESTHOOD ISSUE

"We are asked by a Mission President to comment on the action of President John Taylor in September, 1886, in setting men apart to continue the principle of plural marriage, as it affected subsequent actions of the leaders of the Church. "I can understand President Taylor's authority", our correspondent observes, "to institute certain powers and regulations during his life time, but how such actions may be continued into another President's administration, binding it to like policy, is a question not clear to my mind. While, according to your teachings, President Taylor provided for a perpetuation of the principle of polygamy, yet his successor, Wilford Woodruff, issued a Manifesto abandoning the practice, his action being approved by the Church in General Conference.

"Of course I know, as you point out, that the Manifesto was not a revelation; neither did it stop polygamy among the Saints, for I have the word of President Grant that certain parties were permitted to enter that principle through Brother Ivins in Mexico some years after the Manifesto. But I also have in mind public statements made by Presidents Snow and Smith, in which they denied that such marriages were performed in their day with their knowledge or with the consent or approval of the Church; and I remember President Grant making the statement, I believe, at a conference shortly after he became President, to the effect that no man on the earth had the right to perform a plural marriage. Of course that included himself; and if the statement was true certainly the action of President Taylor in setting those men apart to perform plural marriages became nullified by subsequent action of the Church.

"I am aware of the fact that the law of plural marriage is a law of the Priesthood, as the revelation states, but the question is: Can the Priesthood function outside of the Church organization? And is there a

Priesthood organization possessing powers above those of the Church organization? These are the questions, it seems to me, that confront the Saints now.

"If you can throw some light upon this knotty subject I shall appreciate it and I feel it will have a good effect with the Saints generally."

Our correspondent has struck a vital chord. He propounds questions of greatest moment - questions that ought to be met frankly, clearly and fearlessly; for upon their proper solution, in large measure, depends the progress of this people. Many of the Saints, to our knowledge, are bewildered over the questions that are constantly arising - in the circumstances it is natural they should be - and yet the word of the Lord is plain and with proper investigation and reflection no true Latter-day Saint need be led astray.

As our correspondent intimates, perhaps unconsciously, the question before the Saints today is purely and simply a Priesthood issue. Such in fact always has been the case. It is either the rule of God or the rule of Satan. God rules through Priesthood, which comprises the laws of eternity. His rule is positive, leading to light, glory and eternal progress. While Satan's rule is a negative one resulting in sorrow, darkness, disappointment and final death. Priesthood has always been the issue - either the Priesthood of God or of Satan.

President George Q. Cannon made this point clear in saying:

The direst persecutions we ever had to suffer, occurred before the doctrine of polygamy was taught or believed in (by the people). There is nothing short of complete apostasy, a complete denial of every principle we have received, A THROWING AWAY OF THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD, that can save us from persecution. When this takes place, when all the CHIEF FEATURES of the Gospel are obliterated, when we can float along the stream and do as the world does, then and not till then will per-[PAGE 4]secution cease, or until the adversary is bound. - J. of D., 22:373-4. (1)

In coming to these mountains Brigham Young promised the Saints that if they would keep the commandments of God - live up to their covenants - they would never again come under any other rule than that of Priesthood; no man-invented regency would rule over them. It was so in the days of ancient Israel when the Lord, through his servant Moses, offered the people the rule of Priesthood which meant a freedom and peace to them they had never enjoyed since the abduction of Joseph into Egypt. The Lord had offered the same blessing to Cain, but it is written that "Cain loved Satan more than God", and he rejected the rule of Priesthood and became "Master Mahan", the father of lies, the antithesis of Priesthood. And so the Saints in the days of Samuel, in the days of the Nephites, in the Apostolic era, all strayed from Priesthood rule. The World today as rejected the Priesthood and is under the rule of the Prince of Darkness.

Let it then be understood that the questions hinted at by our correspondent involves Priesthood powers and the answer must be approached from this viewpoint. Our correspondent asks, "Can the Priesthood function out of the Church?" and "is there a Priesthood organization possessing powers above those of the Church organization?"

The answer to both questions must be "Yes".

Let us ask by what authority the Church was organized? Did the Church set up the Priesthood, or did the Priesthood organize the Church? Certainly the organizing power is greater than that which is organized. The builder of a house is greater than the house. The Priesthood may organize and disorganize at the will of God, and the Church is one of its creatures. Unfortunately a strong tradition has grown up among the Saints, placing the Church as the highest organization - the ultimate in power and authority in the earth. Under this tradition the President of the Church in all instances is presumed also to be the President of

Priesthood, thus automatically becoming God's mouthpiece on earth. But this claim is unsound and in the light of facts and scripture cannot be maintained. The claim has doubtless resulted from the fact that Brigham Young, John Taylor, and Wilford Woodruff, who in their respective days each became the President of Priesthood by reason of his seniority in the higher order of the Priesthood with which he was endowed under the hands of Joseph Smith, also in his turn becoming President of the Church. It is true these brethren each held a dual position, but the one was ever subordinate to the other - the priesthood ruled. Since the day of Wilford Woodruff the dual positions have not been held, the President of Priesthood being separate and apart from the President of the Church. (2)

[PAGE 5] Joseph Smith, in his day, held three major positions, two of them being subordinate and dependent upon the one - the President of Priesthood; he also being President of the Church and President of the High Council at Kirtland.

In their sermons and writings today the leaders of the Church seem completely to overlook the position and functions of Priesthood as an organization and an organizing power, placing the Church above all and claiming that since the Church is organized Priesthood must function within its operations and cannot function independently. (3)

The falsity of this position we will endeavor to make clear. And let it be understood from the onset that our purpose is not one of carping criticism, personal animosity or "private pique". We have in mind only the broad duty of teaching the truth and establishing righteousness. We have love toward all men; not, however, loving the faults and sins of men. All men are children of the same Father, and there can be no place in our hearts for hatred toward any of God's children. We would have all men know the truth, for it is truth properly understood and absorbed, that will make them free.

"Truth is truth where'er found Be it on native or alien ground."

First, then, Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were endowed with the Priesthood - the Aaronic and then the Melchisedek.

This was all done before the Church was organized. The Priesthood first functioned in Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery and, later in others. The "Gospel of the Kingdom" was preached, converts were baptized and the "Gift of the Holy Ghost" bestowed, still no church organization, according to the laws of the land, was in existence. The Priesthood could and did function without the Church. It had done so before. The Church, on both hemispheres, had been driven "into the wilderness" on different occasions, but the Priesthood has ever stood guard over God's people to warn, reprove, bless, console and direct.

Quoting Apostle Orson Pratt:

The Lord, before He suffered this Church to be organized, gave authority to His servants to preach the Gospel and to organize His kingdom on the earth in fulfillment of the ancient prophecies. In connection with this authority, He gave them authority to administer the ordinances of the Gospel to those that would repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. He not only gave them power and authority to baptize for the remission of sins, but also to lay their hands upon the heads of baptized believers and pronounce upon them the blessings of the Holy Ghost as they did in ancient days. - J. of D., 21:133.

[PAGE 6] But the time came when further organizations were needed in order to advance the work more rapidly. One may, in time, build a house with the aid of a saw and a hammer, but better and quicker work may be accomplished with additional tools. The Church, with its complement of auxiliary helps, was the additional tool the Priesthood required at that time. It was accordingly organized with six members, Joseph and Oliver becoming the first and second Elders (its leaders) respectively. Later

(March, 1833), to further facilitate the work, the Church was given a First Presidency. (4)

Joseph Smith, who by right of previous ordination and appointment under the hands of Peter, James and John, became President or head of Priesthood, was very properly chosen as President of the Church, hence officiating in dual positions, the latter subordinate to the former. Hence, Joseph Smith as President of the Church, received instructions from Joseph Smith as President of Priesthood. And later, when the High Council was organized at Kirtland (Feb. 17, 1834) Joseph became President of that body, thus holding two subordinate positions to that of Priesthood.

The next major step was the organization of a quorum of twelve Apostles. The Church had been made the custodian of the spiritual ordinances of the Priesthood - it became the propaganda division thereof - and now needed helps and governments to assist it. The Twelve was chosen whose duty was to take the Gospel into all parts of the world where the church organization had not been set up. This quorum is also a creation of the Priesthood appointed for the Church, and is to work under the direction of the First Presidency of the Church.

The Twelve, in pursuance of its work, needed additional tools. The Priesthood gave the Church the quorum of Seventy Apostles to work under the supervision of the Twelve, both being subject to the First Presidency which received its instructions from the Priesthood.

These various steps are logical, sound, and enduring. In no case does the Priesthood surrender its powers - it delegates them to its servants who ever remain subject to the Head. In like manner it is understood that Jesus Christ will become the Lord and King of this earth, under the direction of his Father who doubtless presides over many earths. Jesus Christ will always be subordinate to his Father but the President over those under him.

Time and growth render it necessary that the Church be given further organization at home. More helps and governments are needed properly to care for the Saints born in the covenant and those gathering to Zion out of the world. Many poor are among them, hence the Women's Relief Society. As sisters are by nature the world's nurses and home makers, it is but proper they should head this important work. Then the children must have greater training and a broadening social environment not possible of attainment in the home - let us say a more orderly course in group training - hence the Sabbath School and Primary [PAGE 7] Association. As children grow into early manhood and womanhood, with expanding minds, they reach out for and demand a broader training, and they are given the Mutual Improvement Associations: all auxiliary to the Church itself being an appendage to the Priesthood. (D. & C., 107:51).

Three Grand Orders

There are three grand orders of Priesthood explained by the Prophet, Joseph Smith, (His. of Church, 5:554-6). All Priesthood, it must be borne in mind, is Melchisedek, or after the order of the Son of God. In other words. Priesthood is God; strict compliance with its laws constitute Gods. Latter-day Saints generally recognize only two divisions of Priesthood: Aaronic or Levitical, and Melchisedek or the higher. The Prophet, answering the questions. "Was the Priesthood of Melchisedek taken away when Moses died.?" (5) stated:

All Priesthood is Melchisedek, but there are different portions or degrees of it. That portion which brought Moses to speak with God face to face was taken away; but that which brought the ministry of angels remained. ALL THE PROPHETS HAD THE MELCHISEDEK PRIESTHOOD AND WERE ORDAINED BY GOD HIMSELF. Teachings of Joseph Smith, p. 180.

But what of the "Three Grand Orders" referred to by the Prophet? Beginning with the lower order, the Prophet mentions as the 3rd, he said: (His. of Church, 5:554-6)

(It) is what is called the Levitical Priesthood, consisting of priests to administer in outward ordinance, made without an oath; but the Priesthood of Melchisedek is by an oath and covenant. The 2nd Priesthood is Patriarchal authority. Go to and finish the temple, and God will fill it with power, and you will then receive more knowledge concerning this Priesthood. (6)

This second order pertains to the Church:

First, I give unto you Hyrum Smith, to be a Patriarch unto you to hold the sealing blessings OF MY CHURCH, even the Holy Spirit of promise, whereby ye are sealed up unto the day of redemption, that ye may not fall notwithstanding the hour of temptation that may come upon you. - D. & C., 124:124.

The Patriarch is at the head of the Church - the father of it. He holds the sealing blessings pertaining to it. When things are in order, he presides over the President of the Church, being higher in Priesthood authority.

Next in order:

I give unto you (Joseph), my servant Joseph, to be a presiding elder (the President) over all my church, to be a translator, a revelator, a seer, and prophet. - Verse 125.

This, then, was the second office in the Church - the Patriarch being the first. In this set-up Hyrum was ahead of Joseph (in the Church), but, however, being subordinate to Joseph in the Priesthood.

Here, the reader will note, the Lord is giving Joseph as President of Priesthood, the various helps and governments needed by him in establishing the kingdom of God in this last dispensation, of which he (Joseph) was the head. These were the "officers belonging to my Priesthood", Joseph holding the keys thereof. - Verse 123.

[PAGE 8] The Lord then proceeds to give other officers, - Joseph's counselors, the Twelve and its presidency, etc. Then is provided that the quorum of First Presidency shall "receive the oracles (revelations and instructions) for the whole church." - Verse 126. (Receiving them from God through the President of Priesthood).

The Church, then, is auxiliary to Priesthood - one of its helps and governments. "The Priesthood is essential the Church", said President J. Reuben Clark, "but the Church is NOT essential to the Priesthood." This truth is obvious and should for all time settle the notion many of the Saints have that the Church is the head - the ultimate in power and authority.

The Patriarchal Priesthood descends from father to son, while the higher order is, as the Prophet explained it:

"Without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually." The Melchisedek Priesthood holds the right from the Eternal God, and not by descent from father and mother, and that Priesthood is as eternal as God Himself, having neither beginning of days nor end of life. - History of Church, 5:555.

The Prophet explains the first or higher order of Priesthood as follows:

The King of Shiloam (Salem - Melchisedek) had power and authority over that of Abraham, holding the key and the power of endless life. * * * Those holding the fulness of the Melchisedek Priesthood are kings and priests of the Most High God, holding the keys of power and blessings. In fact that Priesthood is a perfect law of theocracy, and stands as God to give laws to the people, administering endless lives to the sons and daughters of Adam.

Brigham Young is credited with the following statement, which is sound doctrine (found in part in J. D., 9:87):

There are in the Church two Priesthoods, namely, the Melchisedek and the Aaronic, including the Levitical Priesthood (D. & C. 107:1). But there is additional Priesthood that has never been delegated to the Church. The Lord Himself handles this Priesthood and gives it to whom and when He pleases. Man does not call another man to this order, neither does man secure it by the request or selection of any man on earth. The call comes by messenger from heaven requesting designated individuals into the House of God (and it is what is known to Latter-day Saints as the second anointing), preparatory to receiving the Second Comforter, which completes their ordination. Sometimes this Second Comforter is given while in the Temple. Often it does not come until years after, even just at death. But they who have had their second anointings can see the face of the Lord and live, even though being in the flesh, as one sees and talks to another.

This Priesthood has been on the earth at various times. Adam had it, Seth had it, Enoch had it, Noah had it, Abraham and Lot had it; and it was handed down to the days of the Prophets long after the days of the Ancients. This High Priesthood rules, directs, governs and controls all the Priesthoods, because it is the highest of all.

Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery received, not only the Priesthood of Melchisedek, but the order of Priesthood that comprehends all power as previously explained - the Priesthood that embraces the Apostolic calling.

Here we must differentiate between the different orders of Apostles:

An Apostle is a "trustee ambassador of Jesus Christ." To be an ambassador of the highest order one must personally know the object of his ambassadorship - in this instance he must [PAGE 9] know Jesus Christ, having had his hands laid upon him. (7)

Joseph, Oliver and David qualified in this higher order. We have quoted the Prophet as saying, "All the Prophets had the Melchisedek Priesthood and were ordained by God Himself." This means that Joseph had had the hands of the Savior laid upon his head, for HE truly was a Prophet; and in no other way does the Lord qualify His higher order of prophets. While all may have prophetic gifts - the light of prophecy may shed its rays upon every son and daughter of God, yet His regularly constituted and authorized prophets MUST be ordained by HIM. The reason is obvious.

In course of time, these three men, with Martin Harris added, were commanded to choose a quorum of twelve Apostles, which they did. And here it will be noted that neither Joseph, Oliver, David or Martin, under whose selection the Twelve were chosen, became members of that group, the choosers holding a higher order of Apostleship.

It must be remembered, too, that it was this higher order of Apostleship that not only selected the Twelve to function as a church council, but also organized the Church; Joseph and his brethren standing separate, apart and above the Church, they representing Priesthood. Later the quorum of Seventy Apostles was organized to assist the Twelve, they, too, functioning as a Church Council, yet owing their existence to the Priesthood.

By virtue of his Priesthood calling Joseph Smith presided over the Church as its President without additional appointment or ordination. The greater may always (by proper appointment) preside over the lesser. However, the First Presidency was formally organized March 18, 1833, by the ordination of Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams as counselors to Joseph in the First Presidency, in accordance with a revelation from

the Lord given on March 8th. But when the Twelve were selected, though they labor under the direction of the First Presidency, the First Presidency did not do the choosing, that service being left to Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, David Whitmer, and Martin Harris, of the higher Apostolic order.

Here then, it will be seen that the Lord chose as His direct ambassadors, Joseph, Oliver, David and Martin - men whom He felt He could trust. These, in turn, chose twelve ambassadors to work under them - men whom they felt to trust; after which, a quorum of seventy ambassadors was chosen whom the Twelve might trust, their work coming under the supervision of the Twelve.

That there were different and distinctive orders of apostles is evident from the facts given, which facts the reader will note, are further fortified by the following:

In a revelation given in September, 1832 (D. & C., 84:63, 77, 118), the Lord said:

And as I said unto mine apostles, even so I say unto you, for you are mine, apos-[PAGE 10]tles, EVEN GOD'S HIGH PRIESTS; ye are they whom my Father hath given me - ye are my friends. * * * And again I say unto you, my friends, (for from henceforth I shall call you friends), it is expedient that I give unto you this commandment, that ye become even as my friends in days when I was with them traveling to preach the gospel in my power. * * * For with you, saith the Lord Almighty, I will rend their kingdoms: I will not only shake the earth, but the starry heavens shall tremble; * * *

Here Joseph Smith and his six associates were designated "High Priest" Apostles, some three years before the twelve was chosen.

Wilford Woodruff, referring to the Apostleship, said:

Let the Twelve Apostles, and the Seventy Apostles, and High Priest Apostles, and all other Apostles rise up and keep pace with the work of the Lord God, for we have no time to sleep. - J. of D., 4:147.

Reporting to Apostle Albert Carrington, at the time President of the European mission, of the calling and ordination of George Teasdale and Heber J. Grant to the Quorum of Twelve, President John Taylor said:

The revelation was submitted to the Twelve and by them accepted and was afterwards read to the Presidents of Stakes, First Presidents of Seventy and a few others. It has been acted upon and the brethren mentioned have been ordained; the two first to the APOSTLESHIP OF THE TWELVE, and the last named (Seymour B. Young) to the presiding quorum of Seventies. Mill. Star, 44:732.

From this it is clearly seen that there is an apostolic order designated as the "Apostleship of the Twelve", which must be subordinate to the "High Priest" Apostles, the order to which Joseph belonged, and the members of which are designated as "Friends".

The Quorum of Twelve operate under the direction of the First Presidency, its special duty being to take the gospel to the world. Here a subordinate organization is working under a subordinate organization; but the Apostleship that enabled Joseph Smith and his associates to organize the Church and select the Twelve, and build up the kingdom of God, was of a higher order; an order that the Lord said He would use to rend the kingdoms of the world: "I will not only shake the earth", said the Lord, "but the starry heavens shall tremble". Of Joseph's Apostleship, Brigham Young stated:

Joseph Smith was a Prophet, seer and revelator (not by the voice of the people, mind you) before he had power to build up the kingdom of God, or take the first steps toward it. When did he obtain that power? Not until the angel had ordained him to be an Apostle. Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery, and David Whitmer were the first Apostles of this dispensation; * * * When a man is an Apostle and stands at the head of the kingdom of

God on earth, and magnifies his calling, he has the KEYS of ALL the power that EVER WAS bestowed upon mortal man for the building up of the kingdom of God on the earth. - J. of D., 6:320. (8)

The question may be asked how Brigham Young, John Taylor and Wilford Woodruff - members of the Twelve in the Prophet's day - received the higher order of Apostleship. This did not come to them in their original ordination to [PAGE 11] the "Apostleship of the Twelve", but Joseph Smith conferred the higher order upon them, in connection with other members of the Quorum of Twelve, shortly before his martyrdom.

On this point Eider Joseph Fielding Smith of the Quorum of Twelve explained:

Moreover, a short time before his martyrdom (in 1844, some nine years after the Twelve was organized) the Prophet bestowed upon the Twelve Apostles - who constituted the second quorum in the Church - all the keys and all the ordinances and Priesthood necessary for them to hold in order to carry on the great and glorious work of universal salvation. - Scrap Book of Mormon Literature, 2:86.

Obviously, had the members of the Quorum received "all the keys and ordinances", etc., pertaining to the higher order of Priesthood - the Apostleship of Joseph in their original ordination - it would not have been necessary for the Prophet to again confer these blessings shortly before his death. Elder Smith sustains his position by quoting Elders Orson Hyde and Wilford Woodruff, also Sister Bathsheba W. Smith, upon this point as follows:

(Orson Hyde) Before I went east on the 4th of April (1844) last, we were in council with Brother Joseph almost every day for weeks. Said Brother Joseph in one of those councils, there is something going to happen; I don't know what it is, but the Lord bids me to hasten and give your endowment before the Temple is finished. He conducted us through EVERY ORDINANCE OF THE HOLY PRIESTHOOD, and when he had gone through with all the ordinances he rejoiced very much, and said, now if they kill me you have got all the keys, and all the ordinances and you can confer them upon others, and the hosts of Satan will not be able to tear down the kingdom as fast as you will be able to build it up; and now, said he, on your shoulders will the responsibility of leading this people rest. (Times and Seasons, Vol. 5:651). (See also 664.)

(Wilford Woodruff) And when they (the Twelve) received their endowments, and actually received the keys of the kingdom of God, and oracles of God, keys of revelation, and the pattern of heavenly things; and thus addressing the twelve (Joseph) exclaimed, "Upon your shoulders the kingdom rests, and you must round up your shoulders and bear it, for I have had to do it until now." (Ib. 698).

(Bathsheba W. Smith) In the year 1844, a short time before the death of the Prophet Joseph Smith, it was my privilege to attend a regular prayer circle meeting in the upper room over the Prophet's store. There were present at this meeting most of the Twelve Apostles, their wives and a number of other prominent brethren and their wives. On the occasion the Prophet arose and spoke at great length, and during his remarks I heard him say that he had conferred on the heads of the Twelve Apostles all the keys and powers pertaining to the Priesthood, and that upon the heads of the Twelve Apostles the burden of the kingdom rested, and that they would have to carry it.

Thus it is clearly shown that to possess the Apostleship of Joseph, Oliver and David - the "highest authority ever given to men on earth" - it was not sufficient that men be inducted into the quorum of the Twelve and ordained to the "Apostleship of the Twelve", as mentioned by President John Taylor, but they must, in addition, receive "every ordinance of the Holy Priesthood" together with the "keys of the Kingdom

of God, and oracles of God, keys of revelation, and the pattern of heavenly things."

These anointings, privileges and powers, the members of the Quorum of Twelve received, not by virtue of their being called into the Quorum of Twelve, but strictly in line with their callings later gives them, of Presiding High [PAGE 12] Priests, the former being an appendage calling only.

This higher order of Apostleship was evidently held by the members of the Quorum of Twelve at the time of the Revelation of the Lord to Wilford Woodruff, January 26, 1880; for in this communication the Lord said:

And while my servant John Taylor is your President, I wish to ask the rest of my servants of the Apostles the question, although you have one to preside over your Quorum, which is the order of God in all generations, do you not, all of you, hold the Apostleship, which is the HIGHEST AUTHORITY EVER GIVEN TO MEN ON EARTH? You do. Therefore you hold in common the Keys of the Kingdom of God in all the world. (9)

Another point germane to the subject is contained in D. & C., 19:29. The Lord (in June, 1829) was revealing to Joseph Smith, Oliver Cowdery and David Whitmer the future call of Twelve Apostles and their mission, then explaining how the Twelve were to be ordained, said:

And they are they who are ordained OF ME to baptize in my name, according to that which is written. - D. & C., 18:29.

Here, it is seen that those who should be selected under the Apostleship of Joseph, Oliver and David are to be ordained "OF" the Lord, through His servants, not "BY" Him personally, at least, not until through experience, training and worthiness, they should show themselves qualified to receive the personal touch of the Master. While these men who were to be chosen, were to be ordained "OF" the Lord, it is clear that Joseph, Oliver and David were ordained personally "BY" him. (See D. & C., 84:42).

The Priesthood proper is presided over by a quorum of seven men holding the higher order of Priesthood, and forming the presidency of the Sanhedrin, when organized. That the Prophet instituted this higher order is clear from his following recording:

Wednesday (May) 4, (1842) I spent the day in the upper part of the store, that is my private office, * * * in council with General James Adams of Springville, Patriarch Hyrum Smith, Bishops Newel K. Whitney and George Miller, and President Brigham Young and Elders Heber C. Kimball and Willard Richards, instructing them in the principles and order of the Priesthood, attending to washings, anointings, endowments and the communication of keys pertaining to the Aaronic Priesthood, and so on to the HIGHEST order of the MELCHISEDEK PRIESTHOOD, setting forth the order pertaining to the Ancient of Days, and all those plans and principles by which any one is enabled to secure the fulness of those blessings which have been prepared for the Church of the First Born, and come up and abide in the presence of the Eloheim in the eternal worlds. In this council was instituted the ancient order of things for the first time in these last days. - History of Church. 5:1.

[PAGE 13] Heber C. Kimball sheds additional light upon this subject:

"Here, in the Territory of Deseret, is the kingdom of God, and here are all the officers pertaining to that kingdom; and here is an organization that is organized after the order of God, and it is organized after the order of the Church of the Firstborn.

"Let me explain what the Church of the Firstborn is. It is the first church that ever was raised up upon this earth; that is the firstborn Church. That is what I mean; and when God our Father organized that Church, He organized it just as His Father organized that Church on

the earth where He dwelt; and that same order is organized here in the City of Great Salt Lake; and it is that order that Joseph Smith the Prophet of God organized in the beginning in Kirtland, Ohio. (The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized in New York before the Saints went to Kirtland). Brother Brigham Young, myself and others were present when that was done, and when those officers received their endowments, they were together in one place. They were organized, and received their endowments and blessings, and those keys were placed upon them, and that kingdom will stand forever." - Heber C. Kimball, J. of D., 5:129.

A year later (May 26, 1843) the Prophet again records:

Friday, 26, at five P.M., I met in Council in the upper room, with my brother Hyrum, Brigham Young, Heber C. Kimball, Willard Richards, Judge James Adams, Bishop Newel K. Whitney and William Law, and gave them their endowments, and also instructions in the Priesthood on the new and everlasting covenants, etc.

Quoting the above, the Church (Historical Record, 6:515) comments:

It afforded Joseph great joy and relief to be able to bestow these blessings upon his brethren - faithful men, whom he had tried and proved, and who never deserted him nor flinched in the hour of temptation and danger. He now felt that the responsibility and care no longer rested upon himself alone, for he had bestowed upon them (the seven mentioned) the keys of the Priesthood, THE SAME THAT HE HIMSELF HELD and whatever might happen to him there were others now who had the authority step forth and build up the kingdom God on the earth and to perform all the ordinances thereof. (10)

This special Priesthood council, being an organization somewhat foreign to the present Church concept, we deem it wisdom to make further explanation concerning it.

That there was a Priesthood council operating wholly separate and apart from the Church and, generally speaking, unknown to the Church, must be conceded for the evidence of the fact is conclusive. A single incident, as related by the Prophet, will give the reader a basis for further study:

Monday, 5 (October, 1835) - I returned home, being fatigued from riding in the rain, * * * and in the evening attended Council of the Twelve Apostles; * * * told them that it was the will of God they should take their families to Missouri next season; also this fall to attend the SOLEMN ASSEMBLY OF THE FIRST ELDERS, for the organization of the School of the Prophets; etc. - His. of Ch., 2:287; Mill. Star, 15:369.

Here, then, is a group of "First Elders" with whom the members of the Twelve were to meet and from whom they (the Twelve) were doubtless to receive instruction and direction. Of this meeting the Prophet wrote (His. of Church, 2:430; Mill. Star, 15:727):

Accordingly, we proceeded to cleanse our faces and our feet, and then proceeded to wash one another's feet. President Sidney Rigdon first washed President Joseph Smith, Junior's feet, and then, in turn, was washed by him; after which President Rigdon washed President Joseph Smith, Senior, and Hyrum Smith. President Joseph Smith, Jun., washed President Frederick G. Williams, [PAGE 14] and then President Hyrum Smith washed President David Whitmer's, and President Oliver Cowdery's feet. The President David Whitmer washed President William W. Phelps' feet. The Bishops and their counselors were then washed, after which we partook of the bread and wine.

On the following day the feet washing ordinance was proceeded with on behalf of the Council of the Twelve, as noted on page 431 of the history.

From this feet washing incident we learn the following valuable lessons:

1st. That the nine brethren who performed the ordinance of feet washing as indicated, were none of them members of the Quorum of Twelve. They were doubtless the "First Elders", a Priesthood group working entirely separate and apart from the Church and independent of it, and with whom the Twelve were to meet in "solemn assembly"; and, being the "First Elders", and consequently higher in the order of Priesthood than the Twelve, the ordinance was performed first in their behalf.

2nd. That each of the eight brethren embracing the "First Elders", was designated by the Prophet as "President", which title is strictly in keeping with their high calling of Presiding High Priests, each of the group being a "President".

3rd. That following the ceremony performed in behalf of themselves, this group of "First Elders" proceeded to attend to the same in behalf of the Bishops and their counselors, they holding the keys of the Aaronic Priesthood independent of the Church; and that following the Bishops, and on the next day, the ordinance was performed for the Twelve, whose calling, as we have shown, was to an appendage ambassadorial office. (11)

Another point worthy of mention: On Sept. 3, 1837, at a Conference of the Church, Joseph Smith was sustained as President of the Church, with Sidney Rigdon and Frederick G. Williams as his counselors, following which procedure we quote:

President Smith then introduced Oliver Cowdery, Joseph Smith, Sen., Hyrum Smith and John Smith, for assistant counselors. These last four, together with the first three, are to be considered the HEADS OF THE CHURCH. Carried unanimously. - His. of Church, 2:509.

Since the First Presidency of the Church consists of three presiding High Priests (D. & C. 107:22) the choosing of four extra counselors - the seven to constitute the "heads of the Church" - must be considered in a broader light than merely adding extra help to the appendage office of First Presidency. Joseph would hardly commit the error of going contrary to the revelation given of the Lord to himself, specifically designating the number that was to constitute this Church position. And here again, it must be observed, Joseph is seen in dual capacities. He was not only President of the Church - an appendage office having a delegated authority and with two counselors - but he was also the presiding officer over the group that constituted the Presidency of Priesthood (having other counselors) - the group that governed all matters pertaining to earth.

[PAGE 15] A similar situation prevailed in the year 1873, at the general conference of the Church held in April, when President Brigham Young, in choosing five other counselors announced that "he had two counselors to aid him as President of the Church; he had the privilege of having seven brethren to assist him in this capacity. (Mill. Star, Vol. 35:292)" Since, as explained above, (only three could constitute the First Presidency of the Church, the "privilege of having seven brethren to assist him in this capacity", undoubtedly referred to some other "capacity" than that of the First Presidency. Brigham Young, like Joseph Smith, was occupied in a dual capacity; he not only presided over the Church as its President, but also presided over the Priesthood of God, and the seven counselors were to assist him in this latter office.

Sufficient evidence is here adduced to show the existence of a Priesthood body functioning separate and apart from the Church.

Speaking of the remarkable incident of the Prophet conferring the keys of the kingdom on his brethren just prior to his death, President Wilford Woodruff, in an address to the M. I. A. Conference, June 2, 1889, stated:

We had had our endowments; we had had all the blessings sealed upon our heads that were ever given to the Apostles or Prophets on the face of

the earth. On that occasion the Prophet Joseph rose up and said to us, "Brethren, I have desired to live to see this temple built (Nauvoo temple). I shall never live to see it, but you will. I have sealed upon your heads all the keys of the Kingdom of God. I have sealed upon you every key, power, principle that the God of heaven has revealed to me or sealed upon me. Now, no matter where I may go or what I may do, the Kingdom rests upon you. - Contributor, 10:381-2.

To become a qualified Apostle of Jesus Christ as before stated, one must know Him personally. In this grand order introduced by the Lord through Joseph Smith, anointings were given which placed the brethren in line to receive their personal anointings from the Master himself. This was evidently achieved. Brigham Young made the remark: "I am Brigham Young, an Apostle of Joseph Smith, and also of Jesus Christ." (J. of D. 5:296). His selection by Oliver, David and Martin, under the direction of Joseph Smith, (or FOR Jesus Christ through Joseph Smith), rendered him an Apostle of Joseph Smith, and when his higher anointings were received and the hands of the Savior had been laid upon his head, he became unqualifiedly an Apostle OF Jesus Christ just as were Joseph, Oliver, etc.

It was this higher order of Priesthood that Moses held, (D. & C., 84:6.23) and which was conferred upon Joseph by Peter, James and John. As Brigham Young said:

Peter comes along with James and John and ordains Joseph to be an Apostle, and then Joseph ordains Oliver and David Whitmer and Martin Harris; and then they were ordered to select twelve more and ordain them. It was done. - J. of D., 6:29.

What, then are the organizations placed on earth by the Lord to bring about the redemption and celestialization thereof? There are three major organizations, set up in the following order:

(a) Priesthood; the higher order of which being God's immediate authority, and to which all other organizations, priesthoods and callings are subordinate. (b) The Church; which is the vehicle used by the Priesthood in its spiritual work, both at home and abroad. [PAGE 16] (c) The Kingdom; having to do with the temporal or civil affairs of the peoples of earth.

The Church and Kingdom, when in order, will operate in all matters under the direction of Priesthood, which in turn, is God's voice.

Have these organizations been effected? Yes, they have. When?

The Priesthood, as an organization, was restored to earth by John the Baptist and by Peter, James and John - the latter in June, 1829. Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery were the first to be endowed with the fulness of the apostolic order, Joseph being President hereof.

The Church was organized by the Priesthood, as before stated. April 6th. 1830, and its auxiliary organizations were perfected from time to time, under sanction of the Priesthood.

The Kingdom organization sprung out of the Church and was given form during the latter years of Joseph Smith's life, culminating shortly before his death in 1844. Regarding the Church, Elder B. H. Roberts wrote:

From the Gospel and the Priesthood comes the Church. The Church is the medium through which the Gospel is promulgated - by which it is made known among the children of men. It is the system of government by which those who accept the gospel are controlled in things religious. It is the government of God on earth pertaining to religious affairs. * * * The authority of the Church comes from the Priesthood, and may be said to be the collected authority of all the quorums of the Priesthood combined - the aggregation of God's authority in the earth, in relation to things religious. Such is the Church. - Outlines of Eccle. His., Roberts, pp. 373-4.

"From the Gospel and the Priesthood comes the Church". The Gospel supplies the necessity for the Church while the Priesthood provides the authority for its establishment. The Gospel came through revelation, one phase of which revelation is the Book of Mormon, "Which (B. of M.) contains a record of a fallen people, and the fulness of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, and to the Jews also." (D. & C., 20:9).

Enlarging upon the subject, Brigham Young said:

This (the Church) is what we are in the habit of calling the kingdom of God, but there are further organizations. The Prophet gave the full and complete organization to this kingdom the spring before he was killed. The kingdom is the kingdom Daniel spoke of, which was to be set up in the last days. * * * I shall not read you the names of the members of this kingdom, neither shall I read to you its constitution; but the constitution was given by revelation. * * *. - Des. News, Aug. 29, 1874. - See also J. of D. 17:156.

Here, then, are "other organizations" besides the Church - indicating at least two others; which, no doubt, is the Priesthood organization and that of the Kingdom. President John Taylor said:

God has established His Church, and we sometimes say His kingdom. What do we mean by "the kingdom of God?" * * * There is the Church of God and the Kingdom of God. The Church of course, refers more particularly to spiritual things, and the kingdom to temporal rule and government and management and to temporal affairs. - J. of D., 20:166.

The two - the Church of God and the Kingdom of God--may be said to be one very much as Christ Jesus and his Father are one one in purpose, in principle, but distinct in organization and mission, both the direct instruments of the Priesthood and neither complete [PAGE 17] without the other. The one, the Kingdom, being God's political government on earth, having within its functions the protection of all people, whether members of the Church of Christ or not. This Kingdom, with Christ the King, is destined to subjugate all other kingdoms and rule the world.

The Church might be termed the spiritual branch or propaganda division of the Priesthood. To its sacred care is entrusted the duty of proclaiming the "gospel of the Kingdom" to mankind - of guarding and administering God's Holy ordinances necessary to the salvation and exaltation of man. It might be said by way of comparison that the Church and the Kingdom - both appendage organizations - are to the Priesthood what the Sabbath Schools, Mutual Improvement Associations, etc., are to the Church - they are the tools or vehicles used by the Priesthood in accomplishing God's purposes on earth.

The Church does not function in political or civil affairs, its labors being confined to ecclesiastical direction; and its jurisdiction is restricted to its membership, with judicial powers limited to acts of excommunication.

It is the Kingdom that controls the political destinies of man - or rather, protects man in his political rights - and to which men of all creeds and beliefs may look for protection in the exercise of their inalienable rights as citizens of earth.

Hence the two organizations, in principle, are one - neither of them perfect without the other; as the man is not perfect without the woman, nor the woman without the man in the Lord, neither is the Kingdom perfect without the Church nor the Church without the Kingdom.

That the kingdom of God was established by Joseph Smith, is evident from the following information extracted from the History of the Church, Vol. 7:381-2:

President (Brigham) Young in writing a letter (May 3, 1844) to Reuben Hedlock, president of the European Mission at the time, said to him: "The kingdom is organized; and although as yet no bigger than a

grain of mustard seed, the little plant is in a flourishing condition and our prospects brighter than ever. * * *

Again in a discourse under date of July 8, 1855, President Young said: "As was observed by Brother Pratt (this morning) that kingdom (i.e., of God) is actually organized and the inhabitants of the earth do not know it. If this people know anything about it, all right; it is organized preparatory to taking effect in the due time of the Lord, and in the manner that shall please him. As observed by one of the speakers this morning, that kingdom grows out of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, but is not the Church; for a man may be a legislator in that body which will issue laws to sustain the inhabitants of the earth in their individual rights and still not belong to the Church of Jesus Christ at all. And further, though a man may not even believe in any religion it would be perfectly right, when necessary, to give him the privilege of holding a seat among that body which will make laws to govern all the nations of the earth and control those who make no profession of religion at all; for that body would be governed, controlled and dictated to acknowledge others in those rights which they wish to enjoy themselves. Then the Latter-day Saints would be protected, if a kingdom of this kind was on the earth, the same as all other people.

The late President George Q. Cannon while editor of the Juvenile Instructor said:

[PAGE 18] We are asked, "Is the Church of God and the Kingdom of God the same organization?" and we are informed that some of the brethren hold that they are separate. This is the correct view to take. The Kingdom of God is a separate organization from the Church of God. There may be men acting as officers in the Kingdom of God who will not be members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. On this point the Prophet Joseph gave particular instructions before his death, and gave an example, which he asked the younger elders who were present to always remember. It was to the effect that men might be chosen to officiate as members of the Kingdom of God who had no standing in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The Kingdom of God when established will not be for the protection of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints alone, hut for the protection of all men, whatever their religious views or opinions may be. Under its rule, no one will be permitted to overstep the proper bounds or to interfere with the rights of others. * * *

It will be noted that Brigham Young makes the positive statement that the "Kingdom of God is actually organized."

The main feature of the Kingdom organization with which we are familiar is its legislative "Council of Fifty", a certain proportion of its personnel comprising honorable men of the earth who are not identified with the Church. This legislative body was known in the days of Prophets Joseph Smith and Brigham Young as the "Council of Fifty". (See History of the Church, Vol 7:213. also 379 - footnote, quoting Brigham Young as saying: "General Council is the Council of Fifty.") It may well be understood that identified with this legislative body, in the early days, were honest and honorable men, not members of the Church, but rightful citizens of the Kingdom, who, as it was their duty to do, championed the cause of the Church in the dark days of mob violence and drivings.

Coming back to the Priesthood as the present issue. We have shown that Priesthood authority is first, and to which all other organizations are subordinate. The Church can carry on with divine favor only as its policies and actions harmonize with Priesthood. This fact is vital. All revelations to the Church came through the Priesthood. Joseph Smith made this matter clear in the following statement:

* * * The Melchisedek High Priesthood was no other than the Priesthood of the Son of God; that there are certain ordinances which belong to the Priesthood, from which flow certain results; and the Presidents or Presidency (of this Priesthood) are over the Church; and the revelations of the mind and will of God to the Church, are to come through the PRESIDENCY. This is the order of heaven, and the power and privilege of this Priesthood. (Not necessarily through the Presidency of the Church, but the PRESIDENCY OF THE PRIESTHOOD. At the present time the Presidency of the Church, speaking of the Church in a restricted sense, is not the Presidency of the Melchisedek Priesthood. (His. of Church, 2:477. Brackets ours).

This in harmony with the teachings of John Taylor, who said:

Those under the authorities of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, have to give an account of their transactions to those who DIRECT THEM in the PRIESTHOOD; hence the Elders give an account to Presidents of Conferences; and Presidents of Conferences to Presidents of Nations, (speaking of conditions in the world). Those Presidents and the Seventies give an account to the Twelve Apostles; the Twelve to the First Presidency; AND THEY TO JOSEPH, FROM WHOM THEY, AND THE TWELVE RECEIVE THEIR PRIESTHOOD. - Government of God, pp. - 117.

"And they to Joseph from whom they, and the Twelve receive their [PAGE 19] Priesthood!" This must be conclusive as showing that Priesthood is first and independent. The First Presidency and Twelve must report to Joseph for all their powers are derived through him as President of Priesthood. Without the authority which he represents there could be no Church nor Twelve. Then, to whom does Joseph report or deliver his power?

Joseph delivers his authority to Peter, who held the keys before him, and delivered them to him; and Peter to Moses and Elias, who endued him with this authority on the Mount; and they to those from whom they received them. And thus the world's affairs will be regulated and put right, the restitution of all things be accomplished, and the Kingdom of God be ushered in. The earth will be delivered from under the curse, resume its paradisiacal glory, and all things pertaining to its restoration be fulfilled. - Ib.

Brigham Young, touching upon this point, said:

I say unto you Latter-day Saints, that the Seventies follow the Twelve Apostles, and the Twelve Apostles follow in the wake of the First Presidency, and the First Presidency follow in the wake of Peter, James and John. * * * THE PRIESTHOOD WHICH PETER, JAMES AND JOHN HELD WHILE IN THE FLESH WAS THE HIGHEST EVER BESTOWED UPON THE CHILDREN OF MEN, AND IT WAS CONFERRED UPON JOSEPH AND OLIVER, AND WITHOUT IT THEY NEVER COULD HAVE BUILT UP THE KINGDOM. - Des. News Weekly, June 6, 1877.

It will be remembered that while Hyrum Smith was appointed a prophet, seer and revelator unto the Church and to Joseph (D. & C., 124-94) yet he was instructed to work under the direction of Joseph as his subordinate in Priesthood powers. (Ver. 95). Here the powers of the President of Priesthood over those of Church authorities are made clear. Although a prophet, seer and revelator, Hyrum was ever subject to Joseph. Under these conditions, if the Church under its present leadership is deemed entitled to further revelation, such will necessarily come through the Priesthood to the leaders of the Church, for that is the proper channel.

These facts are not generally understood nor conceded. The Church has not been fully in order since the days of Brigham Young. He said:

I have had visions and revelations instructing me how to organize this people so that they can live like the family of heaven, but I cannot do it while so much selfishness and wickedness reign in the Elders of Israel. Many would make of the greatest blessings a curse to them, as they do now the plurality of wives - the abuse of that principle will

send thousands to hell. There are many great and glorious privileges for the people, which they are not prepared to receive. How long it will be before they are prepared to enjoy the blessings God has in store for them, I know not - it has not been revealed to me. I know the Lord wants to pour blessings upon this people, but were he to do so in their present ignorance, they would not know what to do with them. They can receive only a very little, and that must be administered to them with great care. * * * (J. of D., 9:269, 270).

And again:

I sometimes think I would be willing to give anything, yes, almost anything in reason, to see one fully organized Branch of this kingdom - one fully organized Ward. * * * Is there even in this Territory a fully organized Ward? Not one. It may he asked, "Why do you not fully organize the Church?" Because the people are incapable of being organized. I could organize a large Ward which would be subject to that full organization by selecting families (Patriarchal Families) from the different Wards, but at present such a Branch of the Church is not in existence. (J. of D. 10:20).

[PAGE 20] At a later date President Young again referred to the Church not being in order, saying:

* * * Now and then one believes that he has a right, when ordained as a Bishop, to officiate and preside over every temporal and spiritual interest in his district by virtue of his Bishopric; * * * the duties and powers of a Bishop cease the very moment he steps over the Aaronic Priesthood, which is to officiate in temporal things; when he passes this he immediately begins to officiate by the authority and power of the Melchisedek Priesthood, though he may not know it.

* * * It is chiefly because of the IGNORANCE OF THE PEOPLE that we often concentrate in one man these different offices and callings, but when the people are sufficiently informed and have advanced further in the knowledge of the truth, it will have its full quota of officers - a Patriarch, President, Bishop, High Council, and all officers that are necessary for the work of the ministry and the edifying of the body of Christ. * * * - Ib. 96-7.

Here will be noted the Patriarch comes first, followed by a President and a Bishop; and this order applies alike to the Ward, Stake and Church.

In his opening address at the special conference called for the reorganization of the First Presidency (after the death of Lorenzo Snow), Nov. 10, 1901, President Joseph F. Smith said:

We have not always carried out strictly the ORDER OF THE PRIESTHOOD; we have varied from it to some extent; but we hope in due time that, by the promptings of the Holy Spirit, we will be led up into the exact channel and course THAT THE LORD HAS MARKED OUT FOR US TO PURSUE, and adhere strictly to the order THAT HE HAS ESTABLISHED. I will read from a revelation that was given to the Prophet Joseph Smith, at Nauvoo, Hancock County, Illinois, January 19, 1841, (D. & C. 124) which stands AS THE LAW OF THE CHURCH in relation to the presentation of the authorities of the Holy Priesthood as they were established in the Church, and from which I feel WE HAVE NO RIGHT TO DEPART. The Lord says:

"First, I give unto you Hyrum Smith, to be a Patriarch unto you, to hold the sealing blessings of my Church, even the Holy Spirit of promise, whereby ye are sealed up unto the day of redemption, that ye may not fall, notwithstanding the hour of temptation that may come upon you."

It may be considered strange that the Lord should give first of all the Patriarch; yet I do not know any law, any revelation or any commandment from God to the contrary, that has ever been given through any of the Prophets or Presidents of the Church. At the same time we well know that this order has not been strictly followed from the day we came

into these valleys until now - and we will not make any change at present. - Con. Rep., Nov. 10, 1901, p. 71; Mill. Star, 63:801,802.

"The order of Priesthood has not been followed", is not now being followed, but this lack of Priesthood order does not change the law. The Patriarch is the Father of the Church, subject, of course, to the President of Priesthood who may or may not be the President of the Church. While Joseph Smith was President of the Church, Brigham Young made this observation:

The first principle of our cause and work is to understand that there is a Prophet in the Church, and that he is the head of the Church of Jesus Christ on earth. Who called Joseph to be a Prophet? Did the people or God? God, and not the people called him. Had the people gathered together and appointed one of their number to be a Prophet he would have been accountable to the people; but inasmuch as he was called by God, and not the people, he is accountable to God only and the angel who committed the Gospel to him, and not to any man on earth. - Spoken July 29, 1843, His. of Church, 5:521.

And later, he said:

Perhaps it may make some of you stumble, were I to ask you a question - Does a man's [PAGE 21] being a Prophet in this Church prove that he shall be the President of it? I answer, no! A man may be a Prophet, Seer and Revelator, and it may have nothing to do with his being the President of the Church. Suffice it to say, that Joseph was the President of the Church, as long as he lived; the people chose to have it so. He always filled that responsible station by the voice of the people. Can you find any revelation appointing him the President of the Church? The keys of the Priesthood were committed to Joseph, to build up the Kingdom of God on the earth, and were not to be taken from him in time or eternity, but when he was called to preside over the Church (an auxiliary organization), it was by the voice of the people, though he held the keys of the priesthood independent of their voice. (See D. & C., 124:125; also 102:9, J. of D., 1:133.)

That this position is sound must be apparent to all unprejudiced and thinking minds. Certainly, we say again, the power that organizes cannot be subordinate to that which is organized. It does not make sense. The Church may come and go, as it has done since the beginning of time, but the Priesthood - God's authority - never changes; it can no more change than can the other fixed laws of eternity.

As an example of the operations of Priesthood we have frequently mentioned - we recur to it again, by way of emphasis - is this fact: Shortly after the organization of the Church the Lord revealed to Joseph Smith, as the President of Priesthood, the law of Celestial or plural marriage. Later, Joseph was commanded to enter it and establish it, which he did - wholly aside from and independent of the Church. After a lapse of over twenty years (in 1852) the revelation was presented to the Church and by that body accepted. After some thirty-eight years helping to promote the law (Oct. 6, 1890) the Church became weary and gave it up. It was given up voluntarily, and in direct opposition to a revelation to John Taylor (Sept. 26-7, 1886) and to Wilford Woodruff (Nov. 24, 1889). President Lorenzo Snow, speaking on this point stated:

* * * I feel it but just to both Mormon and non-Mormons that, in accordance with the Manifesto of the late President Wilford Woodruff, dated Sept. 25, 1890, which was presented and unanimously accepted by our general conference on the 6th day of October, 1890, the CHURCH HAS POSITIVELY ABANDONED THE PRACTICE OF POLYGAMY, or the solemnization of plural marriages, in this and EVERY OTHER state.

Here, then, is a definite statement by the President of the Church that the Church has "ABANDONED" not, merely suspended or postponed, the practice of polygamy. However, nothing was said about the Priesthood (an

organization above that of the Church and wholly independent of it) "abandoning" this sacred principle. It is a law of the Priesthood and will, in face of all opposition, be carried on under Priesthood authority.

The question is frequently asked: "Can the Church take the Priesthood away from its members, by an act of excommunication, or otherwise?" This is an important question. If the Church can take the Priesthood away from a man, then it is greater than the Priesthood. Since the Church did not give the Priesthood, it most emphatically cannot take it away. Writing upon this subject, the late President Joseph F. Smith stated:

The Lord can take away the power and efficacy of their ordinations, and will do so if they transgress. No endowments or blessings in the House of the Lord, no patriarchal blessings, no ordination to the Priesthood, [PAGE 22] can be taken away, once given. To prevent a person FOR CAUSE from exercising the rights and privileges of acting in the offices of the Priesthood (within the Church organization), may be and has been done, and the person so silenced still remains a member of the Church, BUT THIS DOES NOT TAKE AWAY FROM HIM ANY PRIESTHOOD THAT HE HELD. - Imp. Era., 11: 466.

Since it was the Priesthood that organized the Church, and the Church is subordinate to Priesthood, certainly the Church does not now nor can it ever control Priesthood. How, then, can the powers of Priesthood become forfeit? The Lord answers:

That they (the rights of the Priesthood) may be conferred upon us, it is true; but when we undertake to cover our sins, or gratify our pride, our vain ambitions, or to exercise control, or dominion, or compulsion, upon the souls of the children of men, IN ANY DEGREE OF UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, behold, the heavens withdraw themselves; the Spirit of the Lord is grieved; and when it is withdrawn, AMEN TO THE PRIESTHOOD, OR THE AUTHORITY OF THAT MAN. - D. & C., 121:37.

That is the way - the only way - that men may be deprived of their Priesthood authority.

And here, let us differentiate between his earthly institution called the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, to which all classes of men become members, and the Church of the Firstborn whose membership comprise only those who obey the Lord in all things. On this point Elder Joseph Fielding Smith wrote one of the brethren as follows:

Answering your question in regard to the Church of the Firstborn, I refer you to Section 76, verses 50 to 60, and Section 93, verses 21 and 22. From these passages you will see that the members of the Church of the firstborn are THOSE WHO OVERCOME ALL EVIL BY FAITH; WHO KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE LORD IN THEIR FULNESS AND HAVE OBTAINED THE ORDINANCES OF THE TEMPLE. THOSE WHO DO NOT ATTAIN TO THIS POWER MAY BE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS BUT THE LORD DOES NOT GIVE INTO THEIR HANDS ALL THINGS.

This is conclusive. No earthly power can deprive one of membership in the Church of the Firstborn. That function is controlled by principle and law and not by expedience, prejudice or personal pique. "All power is not immediately derived from the same source, but all legitimate right of Government is in the Priesthood of God." - Mill. Star, 14:593.

Another point must be kept in mind:

All men ordained to the higher order of Priesthood and qualifying in such are Prophets. One of our present-day difficulties is, that certain of the Saints are required, under oath, to declare the present President of the Church, his counselors and the members of the Quorum of Twelve, to be prophets, seers and revelators. This many of the Saints hesitate to do. They say the President himself has disclaimed being a

prophet, he never having prophesied, never having received a divine communication, nor seen nor heard from heaven. Certainly his counselors do not claim more, and the members of the Quorum are not more divinely informed. The President himself (Heber J. Grant), on more than one occasion, has said: "Oh, if we could only get the word of the Lord upon the subject!" We admire the frankness of the President. We believe him to be truthful in this respect. We deeply deprecate the efforts of his associates to [PAGE 23] place in his mouth or within the range of his experience that which he says is not true. President John Taylor gives the following information:

Seth, Enos, Canaan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, all of whom held the High Priesthood, (or more properly speaking the higher order in the Priesthood), and were CONSEQUENTLY prophets of the Lord. - Mediation and Atonement, p. 68.

This is the test. They all held the "High Priesthood" and were "consequently" prophets. It must be remembered that many that have had the Melchisedek Priesthood conferred upon them, having been ordained Elders. Seventies, members of the Quorum of Twelve, etc., have not yet had the fulness of the High Priesthood conferred upon them. On this point, Brigham Young said:

Think not, O ye Elders of Israel that your eternal heirship is won, and immutably secured, because you have attained to a PORTION of the Holy Priesthood, and a FEW of its initiating ordinances. * * * Think not that you are legally entitled to even ONE WIFE, while you live on this earth unless you are sealed up to everlasting lives, by the will and decree of the Eternal Father; and a knowledge of the fact has been communicated to you, through the proper source, and not direct to you, in person. - Epistle from 1st Presidency, Des. News, April 16, 1853; Mill. Star 15:440.

How shall the President of the Church be selected?

The President of the Church, who is also the President of the Council, is appointed by revelation, and acknowledged in his administration, by the voice of the Church. * * * and it is his privilege to be assisted by two other Presidents, appointed after the same manner that he himself was appointed. * * * - D. & C., 102:9, 10.

Here it is shown that the President of the Church is to be chosen by revelation and is to be assisted by two other Presidents (counselors) who are also chosen by revelation.

In another revelation (Ib. 107:22) the Lord said:

Of the Melchisedek Priesthood, three Presiding High Priests, chosen by the body (of the Priesthood), appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the Church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church.

What relation does the present leader of the Church (Heber J. Grant) bear to this higher order of Priesthood as has been set forth? It is well known that he was called "to the Apostleship of the Twelve" in 1882 by revelation from the Lord through John Taylor. But is there a revelation calling him into the Presidency of the Church, and were his counselors called by revelation?

Has the present leader received the higher anointings that were conferred on Brigham Young and others, and which Joseph had received before them? If so, has he qualified by having the hands of the Master laid upon his head as Oliver Cowdery, under the direction of Joseph Smith, said was a prerequisite to the fulness of the Apostleship? He has stated to the contrary on numerous occasions. (TRUTH 4:175).

The present leader (Heber J. Grant), with his counselors and the Twelve are sustained as Prophets, Seers and Revelators, those who refuse to sustain them as such, being "de-churched" for insubordination. A Prophet - the mouthpiece of God - must, as we have shown, be called by

revelation, hold the Melchisedek Priesthood and be ordained by God himself. Is this the case [PAGE 24] with the present leader? He has stated frankly, and we believe honestly, that he has received no revelation; that he as neither heard the voice of the Master nor seen his face.

The higher order of the Priesthood comprehends the authority to perform celestial or plural marriages. Does the present leader have such authority? He denies having it. On this point he says:

But I want to say to the Latter-day Saints that no man upon the face of the earth has any right or any authority to perform, a plural marriage, and there are no plural marriages today in the Church of Christ, because no human being has a right to perform them. - Conference Pamphlet, April, 1921, p. 202.

That no plural marriages are authorized by the Church is true, for the Church is officially on record, since the Manifesto of 1890, as prohibiting them within its jurisdiction, but to say that no person on earth has the authority to perform them is an untruth. Such authority is a function of the higher order of Priesthood. In acknowledging that he has no such authority does not the President acknowledge that he does not possess the higher order of Priesthood? What power was it that functioned in performing plural marriages after the Manifesto, if not the power of the Priesthood? The President will not say that no such marriages were performed for we have his written testimony that they were - that the late President Anthony W. Ivins performed them. If the authority to perform such marriages existed in the day of Wilford Woodruff, of Lorenzo Snow and of Joseph F. Smith, when did it cease? It has not ceased, except with the present leader of the Church who acknowledges that he hasn't the power or authority.

Must Priesthood function exclusively within the channels of the Church as some of the leaders aver, and has it always done so since the Church was organized? If so, by what authority did Joseph Smith introduce the practice of plural marriage among a few of his brethren without church knowledge or consent? And why, after the Church voted to suspend the practice, did certain men, under the Priesthood authority, continue to perform such marriages? If men possessed the authority to perform plural marriages by virtue of the Priesthood, acting wholly independent of the Church, after the Church Manifesto, and the present leader does not possess that authority, is he President of Priesthood? How can he be President of Priesthood and yet not possess the authority to function fully in the Priesthood?

It is acknowledged in a hundred ways that Section 132 in the Doctrine and Covenants, treating on plural marriage, is a law to this people and must be lived. Heber J. Grant has, time and again, held the Doctrine and Covenants up before the Saints telling them that every revelation contained therein (including, of course, Section 132) must be lived. If that be true - and it is - and if the leader, as he states, has no authority to perform plural marriages, how can he profess to hold the Priesthood power by which such marriages are performed? Does the President assume to say that notwithstanding plural marriage as embraced within See. 132, must be lived in order to get exaltation, yet it cannot be lived in this day because he hasn't the authority to perform a sealing?

These are pertinent questions and their answers should be understood by the Saints.

[PAGE 25] This, then, brings us to the problem troubling our correspondent. We have shown that there is a Priesthood organization greater than that of the Church; and that Priesthood always has, can now and will continue to function aside from and independent of the Church. In his sermon from which we have quoted (Contributor, 10:383), President

Woodruff speaks of a Priesthood organization as well as a Church organization. The two organizations are distinct, the one being subordinate to the other.

John Taylor, not as President of the Church, but as President of Priesthood, took certain action Sept. 27, 1886. Had that action been taken as President of the Church, to render it legal, the Church would necessarily have had to approve it by vote as it later did the Manifesto of Wilford Woodruff; as "All things must be done by common consent in the Church", (D. & C. 26:2). Acting, however, in purely a Priesthood capacity, as President Taylor did, he was within his rights and the Church was not involved. And again, acting as he did under the command of Jesus Christ and Joseph Smith, only a countermanding order from the same source can nullify or set aside said action. It is for this reason the action of John Taylor could not be revoked by his successor in the Presidency of the Church - the Church having had nothing to do with the action.

It is true, after the death of John Taylor, Wilford Woodruff, being the senior in ordination in the higher order of Priesthood, held a like position with that of his predecessor, but no authority came from Jesus Christ to him to cancel John Taylor's action. For while he issued a Manifesto stopping plural marriage within the Church - doing so as President of the Church - yet, in his Priesthood capacity, he appointed men and set them apart - among them Anthony W. Ivins - to perform such marriages, an act clearly within the functions of Priesthood and above the jurisdiction of the Church. In the act referred to (Sept. 27, 1886) President Taylor, under the direction of Joseph Smith, who was present in the room in person, chose five men and set them apart to continue such marriages, after the Church should have discontinued them within its jurisdiction: with authority also to set others apart in like capacity as necessity warranted and as their names were revealed by the Lord. To these brethren - or to those not previously possessing it - he gave the Apostleship such as he himself held and which he had received under the hands of the Prophet Joseph Smith. These five men were John W. Woolley, Lorin C. Woolley, George Q. Cannon, Charles H. Wilcken and Samuel Bateman. President Taylor's second counselor, Joseph F. Smith (George Q. Cannon being the first) was at the time in Hawaii performing a mission. He was sent for and received a like commission from John Taylor some weeks before the latter's death. These six, then, with Wilford Woodruff (who received his anointings under the hands of Joseph the Prophet) formed the Priesthood presidency at that time, with John Taylor the head thereof; such another Priesthood group as had been set up in the days of Joseph himself. And it is within this special group - though its personnel changes from time to time - that the Priesthood keys may always be looked for.

[PAGE 26] The work of John Taylor will continue on unless and until changed by the Savior himself. Priesthood must ever be first. The Church is subordinate to it. This is fundamental. Priesthood can, has and will continue to function independent of the Church, but the Church cannot function, in harmony with heaven independent of Priesthood. Priesthood is the life blood of the Church. Without Priesthood the Church would become non-existent. But no matter what may happen to the Church, Priesthood will ever go on watching over its own and, within the law of agency, keep the Church from going astray. This independence of Priesthood over the Church is reflected in the following statement:

Brigham Young said:

Does the Church want it as God organized it? Or do you want to clip the POWER OF THE PRIESTHOOD and let those who have the keys of the Priesthood go and build up the kingdom in all the world, (independent of

the Church) wherever the people will hear them? - His. of Church, 7:235. (Brackets ours)

Again, speaking of the former Church:

Why have they wandered so far from the path of truth and rectitude? Because they left the Priesthood and have had no guide, no leader, no means of finding out what is true and what is not true, (all revelation coming through the Priesthood). It is said the Priesthood was taken from the Church, but it is not so, the Church went from the Priesthood, and continued to travel in the wilderness, turned from the commandments of the Lord, and instituted OTHER ORDINANCES. - J. of D, 12:69; TRUTH 4:114.

After the death of Joseph Smith, Sidney Rigdon applied for the guardianship of the Church, advancing claims based on ordinations he had received in the Church. Meeting this situation, Heber C. Kimball explained:

* * * Elder Rigdon after he came from Pittsburg never attended council only when he could not avoid it. He has NO AUTHORITY, ONLY WHAT HE RECEIVES FROM THE CHURCH; IF HE WAS ONE WITH US, WHY WAS HE NOT IN OUR COUNCILS? (Councils independent of the Church). He was not in the council pertaining to the High Priesthood until just before he started for Pittsburg. Brother Phelps was the means of bringing him in, but he has not got the SAME AUTHORITY AS OTHERS; there are more than thirty men who have got higher authority than he has. - Times and Seasons, 5:663. (12)

Here we are told that Elder Rigdon failed to attend the higher Priesthood Councils. Evidently he knew little or nothing of them; he was not one to be trusted, even though a member of the First Presidency. There were many who had greater authority than he had, but he didn't seem to know it, he having only such authority as the Church could give him. In the same statement Elder Kimball explains why those matters were not so well known. He said:

[PAGE 27] There are men here brethren, who have got authority, but we don't want to mention their names, for the enemy will try to kill them. - Ib. 664.

Here, then, is the reason a degree of secrecy surrounded some of the actions of the brethren in the early days, a secrecy - by the way - that is still wisely observed in some quarters. Reflecting on this same point, Brigham Young spoke of the freedom of Sidney Rigdon in mingling with the enemies of the people in contrast with the threats and mob drivings of true Latter-day Saints. And to the claim made by Elder Rigdon to the effect that he was following the written word, President Young rejoined:

As to a person not knowing more than the written word, let me tell you that there are keys that the written word never spoke of, nor never will. - Times and Seasons, 5:667. (13)

These incidents all tend to show that behind the scenes - independent of the Church - there was a power little understood then, and perhaps by the masses who depend upon others to do their thinking, no better understood to this day, and which is the governing power of heaven, and from which the Church must receive its life and being - the power of the Holy Priesthood.

A moment's reflection will convince a reasonable mind of the wisdom of this arrangement. Priesthood comes from above. It is theocratic in its operations; all authority and direction coming from God. If a member operating within the functions of Priesthood does so "in any degree of unrighteousness" (D. & C., 121:37) it is "Amen to the Priesthood, or the authority of that man." There can be no unrighteous act done in the name of Priesthood and be made to stand. With the Church it is different. All kinds of fishes are caught in the gospel net.

The Priesthood of God will not lead men astray; not so with the Church. The latter is just what its membership makes it. As its devotees

grow negligent and surrender to the ways of Babylon, so the organization correspondingly weakens. This was the case in the days of Moses when the Israelites abandoned the higher order of Priesthood; it was the case following the crucifixion of Christ when the Church became weakened through imbibing paganism. It was true with the Jaredite and the Nephite churches on this continent, and a like situation prevails in the Church today. The one lesson must be learned, that no matter what course the Church may pursue, the Saints must follow the counsels of the Priesthood. Such a situation arose in the days of the Lamanite Prophet, Samuel. He called the Church to repentance. God ignored the church leadership at that time, which had become corrupt, and sent His message forth through His Priesthood, the Prophet Samuel.

Those in the Church who are faithful in ALL things are few, while the great masses of the Church population are, to a greater or less degree, cold toward true religion, indifferent and of little faith. The Church has proclaimed to the world that only about 3% of its adult population accepted the fulness of the Gospel - entered into and sustained the principle of plural marriage before the Manifesto was issued. That leaves 97%, more or less, indifferent. Would it be right for that 97% of [PAGE 28] pseudo-Saints to control the lives of the 3% of the faithful? If such were true the Church would be but little better than a debating society and would degenerate from a democracy into mobocracy. (14)

In the present day the Church, by reason of its unconverted membership, has gone far stray. Principle after principle it has abandoned; the Church had done it before, and in this day it has ceased to function in the fulness of the Gospel. Only the Priesthood has remained firm, for Priesthood is God and He does not yield to error, while those who repudiate Priesthood or act in any way contrary to its mandates, are forsaken by the Priesthood, the principle being one of self-purification.

In closing, let us say, that the work inaugurated under the Priesthood Presidency of John Taylor must go on. Those opposing it will naturally incur the righteous indignation of an offended God. We are assured that no principle revealed in this dispensation will be revoked or withdrawn. Those desiring the blessings of Abraham must do the works of Abraham - live the law which Abraham lived. There is no alternative. The desire for world popularity or the fear of punishment from the enemy does not solve the problem. The Saints must "stand at the rack, hay or no hay", and let the Lord fight such of their battles as they themselves are unequal to.

QUESTIONS ON PRIESTHOOD

Directed to Dr. John A. Widtsoe, Editor of Improvement Era

Dr. John A. Widtsoe, of the Quorum of Twelve, and Editor of the Improvement Era, again challenges the rights of Priesthood (Feb., 1940, p. 97). His contention is that while Priesthood may function in a limited manner where the Church is non-existent, it cannot do so independently when the Church is organized: it must, in that event, operate wholly within the Church channels. In his article Dr. Widtsoe attacks the position taken in TRUTH (5:179, 202) upon this vital subject. He says:

At times, when the Church, through the wickedness of men, has not existed on earth, the Lord has nevertheless conferred the Priesthood on righteous men, prophets of old. Under such circumstances, the Priesthood has been obligated to function in a limited manner independently of the Church. However, since the Church represents the Lord on earth, whenever the Church exists, any and every person who holds the Priesthood must exercise his power under the laws and authority of the Church. Then, no Priesthood power is recognized on earth outside of the Church. No matter

how much Priesthood a man has received, it is null and void, powerless and unacceptable to the Lord, unless the man has full fellowship in the Church of God.

This extraordinary position assumed by the eminent Doctor, if true, is not only enlightening but revolutionary in the extreme. Since we have treated this subject at some length, and have pointed out the inherent error in the learned Doctor's deductions, we will rest our ease, for the present, by asking a few pertinent questions, and to which we invite an honest and frank answer:

1. In your expression, "unless the man has full fellowship in the Church [PAGE 29] of God", do you mean the "Church of the Firstborn" (D. & C. 76:54, 67, 94), or the church organization of which you are an official; and do you recognize a difference between the two organizations? Will you explain the difference?

2. You say, "since the Church represents the Lord on earth", etc. Does the Church actually represent the Lord on earth independently of the Priesthood, or does the Church not function by authority of and through the Priesthood: in which event is it not the Priesthood which represents the Lord on earth; the Church acting only as its voice in spiritual matters, and that only when specially authorized to do so?

3. Which is the greater, the power that organizes or that which is organized? If the organizing power - Priesthood - is greater, by what law of heaven, logic, or precedent may it be subordinated to that which is organized?

4. If and when the Church gets out of order, as it has done in all ages, is the Priesthood to continue to function under Church domination with the inevitable result of itself getting out of order?

5. Do you hold with the Church leaders in their communication of November 13, 1905 (Imp. Era 10:929) to the effect that the Revelation (Section 85) providing for the setting of the "house of God" in order, is obsolete and of no effect; and that the "house of God", which, of course, includes the Church, is now in order and will so remain, hence doing away with the necessity of the "Mighty and Strong" one coming?

6. If the Church, in connection with the "house of God", is out of order, or is so to become, who is the logical one to set it in order; shall it be the authority that organized it, or will the Church set itself in order? If the Priesthood is to set the Church in order, in the process will it (the Priesthood) be forced to function under the direction of the Church, or independently of it, and would not the former act result in the GREATER being ruled by the LESSER?

7. You hold that Priesthood may function independently, only in the absence of a Church organization. Employing this logic - since the Priesthood organized the Church, why may it not disorganize it at will and again function independently?

8. What is your interpretation of President J. Reuben Clark's statement (March, 1936, Imp. Era, p. 134) that "The Priesthood is essential to the Church, but the Church is not essential to the Priesthood?" Does not this infer that the Priesthood is the greater of the two and may always function independently, when occasion requires?

9. If, as you claim, the Priesthood cannot function independently of the Church, please explain how and why Joseph Smith, God's Prophet, and the head of this Dispensation, broke the rule in entering into plural marriage and initiating others into the principle, without Church knowledge or sanction. In doing this, was he in error - was he a fallen Prophet, as some of the early leaders of the Church claimed? (The Revelation was given as early as 1831, but was not revealed to the Church, nor accepted by it until 1852.)

10. Since you claim Priesthood cannot function independently of the Church, and since the Manifesto of 1890 was [PAGE 30] interpreted by the

leaders as prohibiting further plural marriages in the Church, by what authority were marriages performed in Mexico, Canada, and other parts of the country by George Q. Cannon, Joseph F. Smith, Anthony W. Ivins, John W. Taylor, Mathias F. Cowley, John Henry Smith, and other members of the Quorum of Twelve, besides others not of that quorum? (That such marriages were performed you, Brother Widtsoe, may not deny for the fact is fully established.)

11. If Priesthood cannot function except by permission of the Church, explain the action of President John Taylor, September 27, 1886, in setting men apart to perform such marriages independent of the Church. Perhaps you will not concede this fact. If not, by what authority were Brigham Young, Jr., Abraham H. Cannon, George Teasdale, John W. Taylor, Abraham O. Woodruff, Mathias F. Cowley, all members of the Quorum of Twelve, with scores of others, as published in the Salt Lake Tribune of October 10, 1910, permitted to receive plural wives after the Manifesto?

12. In connection with Question 11, our attention is called to the fact that President Lorenzo Snow. (Smoot Case 1:176), President Joseph F. Smith, (Conf. Pamph., April, 1904, p. 75) and President Heber J. Grant (Official statement of June 17, 1933), each denied that any ease of plural marriage had been performed with Church sanction since the Manifesto of 1890. If not with Church sanction, then, by what sanction?

13. Is not the law of Celestial or plural marriage a law of the Priesthood, (D. & C.132:28, 58, 61) and if so what is to prevent the Priesthood functioning in that law independently, especially since the Church has surrendered it?

14. It must be conceded that Priesthood is God - His power both in heaven and on earth. The Church is a child of the Priesthood, organized by it as a help to it. Since the Church has repeatedly been out of order in the different dispensations, is it rational to assume that Priesthood - which is God - must always continue to operate through it - a broken vessel?

15. If you contend that the Church is not out of order, how do you account for its rejection of the basic principles of salvation, the United Order and the Order of Plural Marriage, proclaimed by our former leaders as necessary to the "fulness of the Gospel?"

16. You will concede that the law of plural marriage was by official action, accepted as a tenet of the Church, August, 1852. The Church reports that notwithstanding this is a vital principle by which exaltation in the presence of God is obtained, yet not more than two or three per cent of its members entered the principle. If this be true the Church must, at least in this respect, have wandered from the faith: and do you still contend that under such circumstances, Priesthood - the power of God - must continue to confine its operations within the channels of the Church and under its unreasonable restrictions? Was Moses so restricted when the Saints in his day rejected the fulness of Priesthood, (D. & C. 84:21-23)? Was the Prophet Samuel so [PAGE 31] restricted when the Saints of his day rejected the Lord; and although he gave them a king as they demanded, did not Samuel go on functioning in the Priesthood independently of them?

17. If the Priesthood cannot function independently of the Church, what did Brigham Young mean (when Sidney Rigdon, Joseph's counselor, tried to kidnap the Church after the Prophet's death) in saying: "Does the Church want it as God organized it? Or do you want to clip the power of the Priesthood and let those who have the keys of Priesthood go and build up the kingdom wherever the people will hear them.?" (His. of Church, 7:235; TRUTH 5:213). And what did Heber C. Kimball mean in saying: "He (Elder Rigdon) has no authority only what he receives from the Church. If he was one with us why was he not in our councils (Councils of the Priesthood?) * * * He has not got the same authority as

others: there are more than thirty men who have got higher authority than he has?" (Times and Seasons, 5:663; TRUTH, 5:213).

18. Brigham Young said: "This Church is what we are in the habit of calling the Kingdom of God, but there are other organizations. The Prophet gave the full and complete organization to this kingdom the spring before he was killed. * * *" (TRUTH, 5:205). What did President Young mean by this statement? If there are other organizations set up by the Priesthood, may it not function in such organizations independently of the Church? And if there were those in a certain Council, as mentioned by President Kimball, possessing higher powers than the Church could give, could not the Priesthood function through them?

Priesthood is a Theocracy - direction coming direct from God, while the Church is in essence a Democracy - all things being done in it by "common consent" of its members (D. & C., 26:2). Will the eminent Doctor contend that the theocracy of heaven is subordinate to the democracy of the Church, and can only move as the Church orders?

If the learned Doctor will answer these questions without equivocation or dodging, which we feel he is in duty bound to do, a useful service will have been performed to the lasting benefit of the Saints.

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(1) That President Cannon expected an apostasy by the Church from many of its basic principles, is strongly inferred: "When this takes place"- i.e. "the throwing away of the Holy Priesthood"; "when all the CHIEF FEATURES of this gospel are obliterated." These two conditions, in large measure, are an accomplished fact, in consequence of which "persecution has ceased", as boasted of by the present leaders, except that waged by the Church against those yet seeking to live the Gospel in its fulness.

(2) The Church is not a Priesthood organization, but is directed by the Priesthood; it is called the Woman (Rev. 12:7, Insp. Vers.), while the kingdom of God is the Man, or the Priesthood. The woman (Church) not holding the Priesthood, frequently goes astray, while the man (Priesthood) either remains sound or is displaced quickly.

(3) In the Improvement Era of September, 1936, Elder John A. Widtsoe published tho following statement: "Nevertheless it has been so ordained, that whenever the Church of God is upon the earth. ALL Priesthood on earth should function within it. The Church is the keeper, under the Lord, of the plan of salvation, and of the Priesthood necessary to carry out the provisions of the plan. There can be no holders of the Priesthood who are independent of the Church. * * * The Church and Priesthood are interwoven; when the Church is upon the earth neither can exist independently * * *" A sufficient answer to this statement is that Joseph Smith received the doctrine of plural marriage - a law of the Priesthood - and established that doctrine among the brethren of the Priesthood many years before the Church had any official knowledge of it. The Church was organized, but Priesthood functioned wholly independent of it. President J. Reuben Clark, of the First Presidency stated: "The Priesthood is essential to the Church, but the Church IS NOT essential to the Priesthood". - Improvement Era, March, 1936.

(4) Of the Melchisedek Priesthood, THREE PRESIDING HIGH PRIESTS, chosen by the body (of Priesthood), appointed and ordained to that office, and upheld by the confidence, faith, and prayer of the Church, form a quorum of the Presidency of the Church. - D. & C., 107:22.

(5) Moses did not die in the sense that we understand the meaning of death. He was translated and in his translated body visited with Jesus Christ in the company of Peter, James and John. (Matt 17:3).

(6) April 3, 1836, Elias appeared to the Prophet and Oliver Cowdery committing to them the "gospel of Abraham", (Patriarchal marriage) saying "that in us, and our seed, all generations after us should be blessed." - D. & C., 110:12.

(7) "You have been indebted to other men, in the first instance, for evidence; on that you have acted; but it is necessary that you receive a testimony from heaven for yourselves; so that you can bear testimony to the truth of the Book of Mormon, and that you have SEEN THE FACE OF GOD." - Oliver Cowdery's charge to the Quorum of Twelve, in the presence of the Prophet Joseph Smith, His. of Church, 2:195.

(8) Recollect that the High Priesthood and the Lesser Priesthood and ALL the Priesthood there is, are combined, centered in, composed of, and circumscribed by the apostleship. * * * The keys of the eternal Priesthood, which is after the order of the Son of God, are comprehended by being an Apostle. All the Priesthood, all the keys, all the gifts, all the endowments, and everything preparatory to entering into the presence of the Father and the Son, are in, composed of, circumscribed by, or I might say incorporated within, the circumference of the apostleship. - Brigham Young, J. of D. 1:134, 135.

(9) The Quorum at this time stood as follows: John Taylor, ordained an Apostle Dec. 19, 1838. Wilford Woodruff, ordained an Apostle April 26, 1839. Orson Pratt, ordained an Apostle April 26, 1835. O. Pratt, reordained Jan. 20, 1843; H. of C. 5:256. Lorenzo Snow, ordained an Apostle Feb. 12, 1849. Charles C. Rich, ordained an Apostle Feb. 12, 1849. Erastus Snow, ordained an Apostle Feb. 12, 1849. Franklin D. Richards, ordained an Apostle Feb 12, 1849. George Q. Cannon, ordained an Apostle Aug. 20, 1860. Joseph F. Smith. ordained an Apostle July 1, 1866. Brigham Young, Jr., ordained an Apostle Oct. 9, 1868. Albert Carrington, ordained an Apostle July 3, 1870. Moses Thatcher, ordained an Apostle April 7, 1879. The names of Francis M. Lyman and John Henry Smith were added to the Quorum, Oct. 27, 1880, after George Q. Cannon and Joseph F. Smith had been chosen as counselors to John Taylor. And October 13, 1882, George Teasdale and Heber J. Grant were designated by revelation, as members of the Quorum, filling existing vacancies, one of which was caused by the death of Orson Pratt, October 3, 1881.

(10) It is sad to relate that William Law did desert the Prophet later, and contributed to his death.

(11) Brigham Young explained that no seats would be provided for the TWELVE or the SEVENTIES in the temples. Quoting: "What, says one, no seats provided for the Twelve, is not this their home? No, their homes are all over the earth, preaching the gospel, building up the kingdom, regulating the affairs of the kingdom of God upon the earth; and we take them in (the temples), as visitors. Are there places to be provided for the Seventies? No; the temples have seats for the First Presidency and the local authorities and not for the traveling ministry." (TRUTH 5:236, also Des. New, June 6, 1877.) The above principle was further clarified in the order of laying the cornerstones of the temple in Salt Lake City. The first stone (S. E. corner) was laid by the head of the higher Apostolic order; next (the S. W. corner) was laid by the Presiding Bishopric; the next (N. W. corner) was laid by the High Priests and Elders; and the next (N. E. corner) by the Quorums of Twelve and Seventy. These latter two quorums of Apostles, as indicated in this action, being separate, distinct and inferior to the higher Apostolic order. - See J. of D., 1:135-6).

(12) A case clearly in point is that of Joseph Smith the Prophet, refusing to longer sustain first counselor, Sidney Rigdon, as detailed at the trial of the latter (Sept. 8, 1844) after the death of the Prophet (Times and Seasons, pp. 663-4) At this trial it was shown by Heber C. Kimball that "Brother Joseph shook him (Sidney) off at the conference a

year ago (1843), he said he would carry him no more; if the Church wanted to carry him they might, But he should not. * * * Brother Joseph would not receive him again, but shook him off. The Church voted to try him again, and it was the Church that received him and not Brother Joseph". It will be recalled that Dr. John A. Widtsoe stated (See note p. 5): "There can be no holders of the Priesthood who are independent of the Church." And yet in this case Joseph exercised the functions of Priesthood, not only independently of the Church, but in direct opposition to its actions. His action, in effect, defied the Church. (In the light of the present attitude and performances of the Church one wonders if the Prophet were here today and attempted to exercise similar powers, if the authorities under him wouldn't seek an order of excommunication and attempt to deprive him of his Priesthood).

(13) Among these "keys" may he noted the Temple ordinances, not contained in the published revelations, but preserved in solemn secrecy.

(14) Elder Joseph Fielding Smith, member of the Quorum of Twelve and general Church Historian, recently (1948) stated that "less than 20% of the members of the Church were EVEN candidates for the Celestial glory". This report shows an appalling condition with the Saints. Only one-half of the candidates are usually elected, and among those elected are many who do not measure up. In the light of this what percentage of the members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are actually members of the Church of the Firstborn?